

REMARKS

Applicants request reconsideration of the rejections in the Office action, based on the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-9 and 16-24 are pending in the application. Claims 10-15 were previously canceled. Claim 1 is amended without prejudice, and claims 21-24 are added. The amendments to the claims are supported by the originally filed application.

Claims 1-9 and 16-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,924,094 to Sutter (hereinafter "Sutter"). Applicants traverse these rejections and request reconsideration.

Amended claim 1 recites, in part, a method for altering encryption status in a database, comprising modifying data in a record of a second set of records of a table in the database in response to a user instruction to modify data in a record in a first set of records in a base area of the table.

Sutter does not teach or suggest at least this aspect of amended claim 1. Sutter describes an independent distributed database system (IDDB system) that includes a plurality of sites. In the IDDB system, all users at all sites *work off-line with local data*. Sutter is clear that, when using the IDDB system, a user at one site is not in communication with a local database at another site. Sutter does not teach or suggest that a user instruction at one site to modify the data in that local database is communicated to another site so that the local database at that other site is modified by the instruction. In fact, performing such on-line transactions is what the IDDB system is particularly designed to avoid so that the unavailability of a central server or the communications between such a central server and the sites does not cause an interruption.

Thus, Sutter's IDDB system does not and cannot embody the methodology recited in amended claim 1.

The following more particularly describes what is described and taught in the cited patent. Sutter describes an independent distributed database system (IDDB system) that includes a plurality of sites wherein all users at all sites work off-line with local data. Sutter also provides that a particular *critical feature* of this IDDB system is that *no* site acts as a "server" for any other site and while some sites may store more data or have more users than others, *all* sites are logically peers. See, for example, Abstract, cols. 3-8, and cols. 9-17 of Sutter.

Sutter does describe that the IDDB system can include a "head office" site and that such a site could contain a database that has the data of all of the sites. Sutter explicitly states, however, that a central database is not required for operation of the IDDB system. Sutter also indicates that even if there were a head office site in the IDDB system, the system is configured so that *all* sites still remained as logical peers (col. 10, lines 4-25). While more data may be replicated at a head office site than at other sites during the synchronization process described in Sutter, there is still no disclosure or teaching of an on-line transaction(s) where a user's instructions to modify the site local database would be communicated to the head off site so the head office site database would be modified by such an instruction.

Sutter describes that in the IDDB system *all* application transactions are against the local database only. Sutter also describes that on-line transactions in the IDDB system occur only in the background, including a periodical "synch" between sites.

Sutter describes that every site stores in the local database "all and only" the data it needs. Thus, the local database of the sites of such an IDDB system does not necessarily include all records of the database. Thus, during a "synch" if data in the local database at a first site is of

interest to a user at a second site, during the “synch” process the IDDB system establishes a communication/data link(s) between the two sites so that data in the local database at the second site can be synchronized or updated with the data of interest in the local database at the first site. Correspondingly, if data in the local database at the second site is of interest to a user at the first site, during the “synch” process the IDDB system establishes a communication/data link(s) between the two sites so that data in the local database at the first site can be synchronized or updated with the data of interest in the local database at the second site. Sutter also describes that only changed data in the local database at the transmitting site is what will be communicated via the data link. Therefore, if the changed data contained in the local database at either site is not of interest to the other site, then the changed data is not communicated. It is clear that the synchronization process is different from the copying and modifying steps of the presently claimed method.

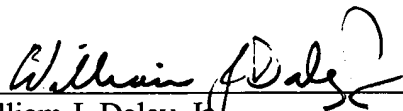
In sum, Sutter describes a system with a plurality of sites. Each site has its own local database in which is stored “all and only” the data that is needed at this site, which necessarily means that the system database is distributed amongst the plurality of sites. In Sutter, users only work on the data in the local database, and the users do not work on-line (*i.e.*, no on-line transactions by users) to modify data in a local database at another site. In the case where data in a local database is of interest to users at another site, Sutter discloses that the IDDB system establishes communications or data links between such sites, so that any changed data at one site can be communicated in the background to another site(s).

In view of the foregoing, applicants request allowance of claims 1-9 and 16-20.

Also, applicants submit that new claims 21-24 are allowable.

Respectfully submitted,

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